
MBA Application Checklist



Version 2.0

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Be Qualified
Be Different
Be Relevant
...Be Admitted!

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Intro to Even Better Consulting

What Clients Say...

I can honestly say that a great deal of my success at the Darden Business School can be directly attributed to Alzay's ongoing support and keen insights.

-JENNIFER DOWNING, Darden '07

A Word About Even Better Consulting...

Be Qualified, Be Different, and Be Relevant – EBC can help!

My name is Alzay Calhoun, CEO/Founder of Even Better Consulting. I would like to congratulate you on your decision to pursue business school and your interest in Even Better Consulting.

I created Even Better Consulting for MBA aspirants because I learned the hard way that applying to business school is a tough process. Some resources for business school applicants offer advice, but none offer real guidance for real people.

As a graduate of the Darden Business School at the University of Virginia, I know the challenges of applying to business school. I also know it doesn't require enormous intellect or vast professional experience to be a successful applicant. My success was due to the fact that I developed absolute clarity about myself and my goals. With that clarity, I was able to communicate my qualifications, my difference, and my relevance to my schools.

This company is *THE* resource to guide you through the process and to help you express your unique voice within it. **Be Qualified, Be Different, and Be Relevant** to impress your business school of choice! EBC can show you how.

Alzay Calhoun
CEO, Even Better Consulting
<http://www.evenbetterconsulting.com/> – Visit now!

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Intro to Article

Where To Begin?

I'm thinking about applying to business school. What is considered a complete MBA application package?
What are all of the things I need?

Here Is Your Answer!

The ebook is a quick guide for someone just beginning the MBA application process. Consider this list a quick layout of the things you need to complete your MBA application. Manage your time well. Some of the items on this list take time to complete. Here is the quick list:

- Application
- Resumes
- Essays
- Letters of Recommendation
- Transcript
- GMAT Score
- Application Fee

Keep in mind, simply “compiling” these things will *not* make you a winning applicant. Everything you create must speak to how you are **Qualified**, **Different**, and **Relevant** in a way that other applicants are not. If you need help look us up at <http://www.evenbetterconsulting.com/> Good luck and enjoy!

The MBA Application Checklist

The MBA application consists of seven major components. These are standard requirements of all top business schools. To increase your chance of success, take the appropriate time to excel in each element.

Here's a quick overview of each component:

The Application

You will download your application, view it online, or request one in the mail. The application will list all of the requirements necessary to apply. Like any other application, you will complete basic biographical information in addition to your academic and professional background. Most schools will allow you to submit the form online and some schools make online submission a requirement. The difficulty level is not very high with this piece of the application, but it may take some time to fill out the application depending on its length.

The Resume

In addition to the actual application you will be required to submit a resume. Be advised, some schools require a specific format for their resume. If no special instructions exist then use a standard, professional format.

Resumes are an important part of the application package, but most applicants spend too much time trying to “perfect” their resume. Remember that your resume is a quick summary of your professional and academic background. There is no “perfect” way to display that. Use an appropriate format, summarize your background, edit for mistakes, and move on to the next piece of your application.

The Essays

The essays are your opportunity to bring your application to life. Essay topics cover subjects such as “strengths and weaknesses”, “why MBA”, and “personal failures”. Each school has its own methodology for how many essays, length of essays, and essay topics. Regardless of their approach, MBA schools are looking for you to prove three crucial things:



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- You are **Qualified**. You have the professional background and academic aptitude to complete a Master's level education.
 - You are **Different**. You bring unique skills and experience to the MBA environment. You know how you stand out.
 - You are **Relevant**. Your skills and abilities will contribute to the short and long term plans of the institution.

This part of the application is often underestimated. It takes sincere time and effort to express and differentiate yourself in a short essay. Create drafts early, ask friends to help, and visit

<http://www.evenbetterconsulting.com/> for assistance.

The Letters of Recommendation

This piece of the application requires you to ask someone else to support your candidacy as an MBA applicant. You are essentially asking a favor of someone else so it is wise to make your target recommenders aware early. Also, be sure that you provide some background information with the recommendation form. Remind your recommender of your professional relationship, your professional successes, and your desire for an MBA. Make it easy for this person to help you. Give them appropriate supporting information and give it to them early.

Transcripts

Submit an official transcript from every undergraduate and graduate institution you have attended. The application will tell you exactly where to have them mailed. Requesting a transcript is easy, but this can get a little difficult if you have attended several schools. Call your former registrar early and be clear on the requisition process.



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GMAT Score

If you are a good test taker you may be able to take this standardized test with little preparation. Be advised, most applicants use some type of test preparation. There are many options available to you ranging from one-on-one coaching to books with helpful hints. Be honest with yourself and get the help you need to do the best you can.

On test day, you can send your score to five schools at no additional charge. This is a good idea and you should really consider it. Sending score reports later will cost extra and you can always take the test again to improve your scores. MBA programs only take your highest GMAT score under consideration.

The Application Fee

Each application you submit will require an application fee. Online applications will allow you to pay this fee with a credit card. If you are submitting a paper application, simply include your payment inside your mailed application package. Be sure to follow the instructions of the different schools.

What Else...

These are the basic elements of an MBA application. On a case by case basis, you may be asked to provide additional information or material. In addition, an in-person interview may or may not be a requirement. What is most important to remember is that your *single* application needs a *single* message. Take the time to brainstorm early and carry your single message throughout your MBA application. Learn to **Be Qualified, Be Different, and Be Relevant**. Go to <http://www.evenbetterconsulting.com/> for details.



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Conclude

You now have baseline understanding of what you need to begin creating your MBA application. Please keep this document and refer back to it as you continue your journey toward your MBA degree.

Again, I'd like to congratulate you on your pursuit of business school and thank you for your interest in Even Better Consulting. Please return to the website for more helpful offerings!

Alzay Calhoun

CEO, Even Better Consulting

MBA, Darden Business School

<http://www.evenbetterconsulting.com/> – Visit now!